

Members

Rep. John Aguilera, Chairperson
Rep. Rich McClain
Sen. Thomas Wyss, Vice-Chairperson
Sen. Vi Simpson
Remo Mezzetta
Dr. Mary Ilu Altman
Juana Orellan Watson
Manuel Gonzales
Salvador Soto
Ronnie Cantu
Mara Candelaria Reardon
Myrna Maldonado
Rudy Lopez
Evelyn Ridley-Turner
Carmen Quintana
Sandra D. Leek
John Hamilton
Claudia Ontiveros
Carmen Natal



LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION ON HISPANIC/LATINO AFFAIRS

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MEETING MINUTES¹

Meeting Date:	September 5, 2002
Meeting Time:	10:30 A.M.
Meeting Place:	State House, 200 W. Washington St., Room 156
Meeting City:	Indianapolis, Indiana
Meeting Number:	1

Members Present: Rep. John Aguilera, Chairperson; Sen. Thomas Wyss, Vice-Chairperson; Sen. Vi Simpson; Remo Mezzetta; Dr. Mary Ilu Altman; Juana Orellan Watson; Manuel Gonzales; Salvador Soto; Rudy Lopez; Evelyn Ridley-Turner represented by Randy Koester, Department of Corrections; Carmen Quintana; Sandra D. Leek; John Hamilton; Claudia Ontiveros.

Members Absent: Rep. Rich McClain; Ronnie Cantu; Mara Candelaria Reardon; Myrna Maldonado; Carmen Natal.

¹ Exhibits and other materials referenced in these minutes can be inspected and copied in the Legislative Information Center in Room 230 of the State House in Indianapolis, Indiana. Requests for copies may be mailed to the Legislative Information Center, Legislative Services Agency, 200 West Washington Street, Indianapolis, IN 46204-2789. A fee of \$0.15 per page and mailing costs will be charged for copies. These minutes are also available on the Internet at the General Assembly homepage. The URL address of the General Assembly homepage is <http://www.ai.org/legislative/>. No fee is charged for viewing, downloading, or printing minutes from the Internet.

Rep. John Aguilera, chairperson, called the first meeting of the Legislative Commission on Hispanic/Latino Affairs to order at 10:40 a.m.. Rep. Aguilera commented that the Commission was just starting its work, and it appeared would not be able to accomplish its purpose in the short time frame before the beginning of the session. For that reason, he has submitted a letter to the Legislative Council asking for permission to meet and for funding through the next summer. Rep. Aguilera then discussed the relationship between this commission and the Governor's Commission on Hispanic/Latino Affairs. Rep. Aguilera explained that this legislative commission would continue the work started by the Governor's Commission. The members then introduced themselves and gave information concerning their backgrounds.

1. Indiana Commission on Hispanic/Latino Affairs

Rep. Aguilera recognized Ms. Pat Rios, from the Office of the Governor, who presented the final report from the Indiana Commission on Hispanic/Latino Affairs (Exhibit A). The report included the following information:

- * Executive Summary
- * Introduction and Background
- * Demographic Overview
- * Issues and Challenges
 - Education
 - Health
 - Civil Rights
 - Employment/Economic Development
 - Migrant Population
- * Conclusions and Summary of Recommendations
- * Members of the Commission
- * Acknowledgments
- * References

Among the items of focus in Mrs. Rios' presentation were those of the appropriation of funding for English as a Foreign Language programs and bi-lingual teachers and government workers (including those of the courts), health issues for individuals who may not be insured in the state, and the lack of worker's compensation coverage for many workers. Ms. Rios stated that there now are nearly 100 Hispanics on various state commissions and committees.

Rep. Aguilera opened the discussion for questions from committee members. Sen. Wyss stated that he thought that the state as a whole was caught by surprise as the population of Hispanics has risen so much in the last 10 years. Senator Wyss also said that this commission was not established to challenge the Governor's Commission, but this commission wanted to continue and expand that Commission's work. A motion to adopt the report was made by Sen. Simpson, seconded by Sen. Wyss, and adopted by a voice vote.

2. Revised Requirements for Issuance of Driver's License

Rep. Aguilera recognized Commissioner Gerald Coleman of the Bureau of Motor Vehicles (BMV), who gave a presentation on the new requirements for obtaining an Indiana driver's license or identification card. Mr. Coleman stated that prior to the new requirements Indiana was a target for criminals trying to obtain identification. He remarked that after September 11, 2001, the BMV wanted to address the security issues related to

fake identification. The new policy was determined after consultation with the Immigration and Naturalization Service, Indiana State Police, and the Counterterrorism Council. Although the policy has been put into place, Commissioner Coleman reassured the Commission that the policy could be changed and the BMV would be open to suggestions.

Rep. Aguilera opened the discussion for questions from commission members. The commission commented on the problems with the new identification and driver's license requirements, and the effect on the Hispanic/Latino community. Mr. Gonzales voiced a concern regarding an elderly legal immigrant who was unable to secure a duplicate license, as the INS documentation that she had was from many years ago. Mr. Mezzetta felt that licenses that are not valid put the employer at risk if driving is necessary for the job. In response to a question from Ms. Leek, Commissioner Coleman stated that at least thirty other states now have similar requirements for the issuance of driver's licenses. Commissioner Coleman contrasted the new system as opposed to the earlier "point" system for issuance of licenses for Mr. Lopez. Senator Wyss praised the BMV for this step and believed that Indiana is now far ahead of many states so that it will find the problems and correct them so that other states don't have to face them. Mr. Gonzales suggested the use of taxpayer identification numbers, but was informed that for several reasons the BMV will not use them in this manner, and the BMV will not separate the requirements for identification cards and licenses. Sen. Simpson then made a motion to place the BMV issues on the Commission's agenda for next meeting. The motion was adopted.

3. Honorable Sergio Aguilera Beteta, Mexican Consul to Indiana

Rep. Aguilera introduced the Honorable Sergio Aguilera Beteta, Mexican Consul to Indiana. Consul Aguilera Beteta discussed issues facing the Hispanic/Latino community, including economic ones. He is aware that many undocumented persons work and pay taxes, sometimes credited to the account of another, and that then services based on employment may be denied to the worker. Mexicans comprise at least 60% of the Hispanics in the state, and it is expected that by 2050 Hispanics will be the largest minority in the United States. He is concerned that not everyone embraces diversity. Consul Aguilera Beteta thanked the commission for inviting him to the meeting, and asked that he be allowed to appear before the commission from time to time to address concerns of the Hispanic/Latino community.

4. Future Meetings

Rep. Aguilera asked for committee discussion on what topics should be included on the agenda for the next and future meetings. Topics suggested by the members included:

- * Qualifications for Home Loans
- * Emergency services
- * The Dream Act
- * The Criminal Justice System
- * Best Practices
- * Employment
- * Education
- * Court Interpreters
- * Business Development
- * Earned Income Tax Credit
- * Update from the Department of Health
- * Update on Temporary Aid to Needy Families
- * Community Mediation

Rep. Aguilera set dates for the next three meetings:

Meeting 2 on September 26, 2002 at 10:30 a.m. in Indianapolis.

Meeting 3 on October 10, 2002.

Meeting 4 on October 31, 2002.

Rep. Aguilera said that BMV would be on the agenda for the next meeting and that he would decide on other agenda items at a later time. Dr. Mary Ilu Altman asked for a few minutes at the next meeting to discuss her trip to the Hispanic/Latino summit. Rep. Aguilera agreed to Dr. Altman's request to speak.

There being no further business before the Commission, Rep. Aguilera then adjourned the meeting at 1:00 p.m.